

September 21, 2004

**Public Notice for 401 Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements
(Dredge/Fill Projects)**

**Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works
Annapolis Bridge Seismic Retrofitting Project
WDID No. 1B03210WNSO
Sonoma County**

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Alynn Kjeldson, on behalf of the Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works, requesting a Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the seismic retrofitting of the Annapolis Road Bridge near Annapolis, California. The purpose of this project is to bring the bridge into compliance with California's seismic safety standards. The proposed project will cause disturbances to the waters of the state associated with the Wheatfield Fork of the Gualala River, Mendocino Coast Hydrologic Unit No. 113.00, Gualala River Hydrologic Area No. 113.80, Wheatfield Fork Hydrologic Subarea No. 13.84.

The proposed project involves seismically retrofitting the Annapolis Road Bridge (also known as Clark's Crossing Bridge) that spans the Wheatfield Fork of the Gualala River, at the intersection of Stewarts Point-Skaggs Springs Road, in Sonoma County, California. The California Department of Transportation is proposing to administer the project as part of a statewide bridge retrofit program. The existing bridge is a single-span, Parker steel through-truss structure, measuring 180 feet in length and 18 feet in width. According to the applicant, the retrofit project would include the addition of steel plates to the portal and beams, and the replacement of the existing bearings. This work involves drilling, bolting, welding, and/or grinding. The applicant has also stated that concrete will need to be added to the bridge abutments. To accomplish this, a contractor will cut the existing asphalt decking with a concrete saw into manageable sized blocks. The old decking will be removed, and properly disposed of, and new concrete decking with an asphalt surface will be constructed. The applicant proposes to deploy a containment system to prevent any materials from falling into the stream.

The applicant has further proposed, as a necessary part of the project, three 12-foot wide river crossings to divert traffic and one 20-foot long by 50-foot wide work pad underneath the bridge. The proposed will be constructed using pipe culverts sized, as per the applicant, to avoid water ponding and significant increase in flow velocity. Fill from on-site gravel will be placed on top of the culverts and compacted to create the work pad and road surfaces. As stated in the project description, gravel will be placed progressively across the channel to minimize the potential for fish entrapment and river impoundment. The work pad is to be constructed directly under the bridge and will span across the entire active channel. According to the county, an additional access route is necessary to accommodate the work pad, and will be graded through the band and across the gravel bar directly under the bridge. It is the applicants' intention to place stream

crossings at shallow parts of the channel to avoid pool habitats and to increase the likelihood that sections of the stream will be dry at the time of construction. The county has proposed to remove all culverts prior to the beginning of the rainy season, approximately October 15th, leaving the gravel fill in place to be redistributed by subsequent winter flows.

The project involves the discharge of approximately 400 cubic yards of dredged and fill material consisting of local river-run gravel and imported crushed rock. The project also involves minor grading of the exposed bar to construct the roadbed and to obtain aggregate material for the road crossings and work pad. These activities would cause temporary disturbance to 0.04 acres of the active low flow channel and 0.8 acre of exposed bar below the plane of ordinary high water.

Equipment used to complete the proposed retrofitting, detour, culvert crossings, and work pad will include an excavator or backhoe, track-layer, bulldozer, lift truck, front end loader, a water truck, pick up trucks, and compressors. The county proposes to maintain, wash, and store equipment outside the active channel. If it becomes necessary to repair a piece of equipment within the active channel, the applicant will use an approved containment system to avoid contaminating the channel.

The project affects 0.84 of jurisdictional Waters of the U.S., as delineated by Richard Stabler, Environmental Specialist, and confirmed by Peter Straub, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, on August 25, 1998 (File #265670N).

As the principle federal lead agency for this project, the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) initiated consultation with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA Fisheries) to address project related impacts to salmonid fish species and designated critical habitat, pursuant to Section 7(a) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. NOAA Fisheries issued a Biological Opinion with an incidental take statement for Northern California threatened steelhead salmon. This Opinion further determined that the proposed project would not jeopardize the continued existence of Northern California steelhead, or adversely affect Central California Coast coho salmon critical habitat.

The retrofitting project is planned to begin in the summer of 2005, and completed before the October 2005 wet season. This project is proposed as a one-time occurrence, as part of a statewide bridge-retrofitting program.

Compensatory Mitigation for this project has not yet been determined. Regional Water Board staff will make this determination prior to issuance of a Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects).

Non-compensatory mitigation measures include the use of an erosion control plan and the preparation of an accidental spill prevention and cleanup plan. Regional Water Board staff will ensure that these plans are sufficient prior to the issuance of a Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects). Work will not occur directly in the wetted channel of the Wheatfield Fork of the Gualala River except as needed to install temporary

road crossings and a work pad. Demolition and construction work shall be performed in a manner that precludes spillage or entry of debris, concrete, asphalt, paint and other construction materials into the low flow channel. Diversion culverts will be installed at the locations of the temporary road crossings and work pad, and will be removed upon completion of the project. Dewatering and temporary culverting activities will be conducted in a manner so as to avoid entrapment and loss of salmonids and other aquatic wildlife. Vegetation removal will be minimized and conducted so as to maximize the potential for re-growth. The applicant proposes to remove no more than 6 inches of gravel from any point in the channel. Disturbed areas of the exposed riverbed and banks shall, as per the applicant, be restored to the approximate preconstruction contour elevation and conditions, including stabilizing and seeding exposed upland slopes. A certified biologist will be available during construction to rescue fish if necessary. Waste material, including water coming in contact with wet concrete will also be disposed of off site as per the applicant. All work occurring below the plane of ordinary high water shall be confined to the low-flow period of June 15 to October 15.

The Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works has requested a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit #14, Linear Transportation Projects, and has obtained from the Corps a Nationwide Permit 33, *Temporary Construction, Access and Dewatering*, (Corps file #265670N). The County of Sonoma, as California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) lead agency, has determined that this project qualifies for a categorical exemption under Section 15269 (e), Seismic work on highways and bridges pursuant to Section 180.2 of the Streets and Highways Code.

Regional Water Board staff is proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act Authority. In addition, staff will consider all comments received during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this notice. If you have any questions or comments please contact staff member Andrew Jensen at (707) 576-2683 or at jensa@rbl.swrcb.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.